

## **Aeschylus**

### **Agamemnon**

*This tragic play of revenge revolves around Clytemnestra, who has been unfaithful to her husband and king, Agamemnon. The captive princess and prophet Cassandra foretells her own death and Agamemnon's at the hands of the vengeful Clytemnestra.*

### **Cassandra:**

Oh, misery, misery! Again comes on me  
The terrible labor of true prophecy, dizzying prelude.  
Do you see these who sit before the house,  
Children, like the shapes of dreams?  
Children who seem to have been killed by their kinsfolk,  
Filling their hands with meat, flesh of themselves,  
Guts and entrails, handfuls of lament -  
Clear what they hold - the same their father tasted.  
For this I declare someone is plotting vengeance -  
A lion? Lion but coward, that lurks in bed,  
Good watchdog truly against the lord's return-  
My lord, for I must bear the yoke of serfdom.  
A daring criminal! Female murders male.  
It is Agamemnon's death that you shall witness!  
Ah, what a fire it is! It comes upon me.  
It is the two-foot lioness who beds  
Beside a wolf, the noble lion away,  
It is she will kill me! Brewing a poisoned cup  
She will mix my punishment while sharpening  
The dagger for her husband; to pay back murder  
For my being brought here. Destruction!  
They call me crazy, like a fortune-teller,  
A poor starved beggar-woman - and I bore it!  
And now the prophet undoing his prophetess  
Has brought me to this final darkness.  
Instead of my father's altar the executioner's block  
Waits me the victim, red with my hot blood.  
I will go in and have the courage to die.  
Look, these gates are the gates of Death.  
I greet them, and pray that I may meet a  
Deft and mortal stroke so that I may close my  
Eyes as my blood ebbs in an easy death.